Mayflyer

Greetings and Happy Sunshine

It has certainly been a wet spring and fishing hasn’t been what you might call normal for quite a while. Penn’s Creek, Spring Creek, the Little J and others have been barely fishable in the last several months and many times not at all. These conditions have been a continuation of the Fall. At this writing, I am hoping to get in a few days on Penn’s Creek early next week.

As of now, no explanation has been found for the extensive fish kill on Donegal Creek. It seems that all traces of the toxin are gone. To our knowledge, the farmers in the watershed all use best practices for farming and maintaining clean water. If you ever come across what might be a fish kill, please report it as soon as possible. The sooner the better. We may never find out where the problem actually came from, but the good news is that many fish, especially wild trout, survived and the stream should make a strong comeback.

As far as DTU events, Pam Williams hosted a Women’s Fly Fishing clinic at Hugh Wenger’s farm in April and it was a tremendous success. Many of the participants became DTU members. Great job, Pam! Please be aware of what’s happening in June. Bill Nolan’s VSP program is hosting a fishing event for orphans at Speedwell Forge on June 15th. He is in need of volunteers so please let him know if you can help. Clearances are required. The following week on June 22nd we are hosting a Special Olympics day at Hugh Wenger’s farm. This is a very special and gratifying day for all involved. Please let Wayne Boggs know if you can help.

Progress on the Chesapeake Bay cleanup is not going as well as planned. We still have a daunting task in front of us to try to undo the decades and decades of abuse. Lancaster County, unfortunately is a major contributor to the problem. Our stream and watershed restoration efforts are more important than ever and the Conservation Committee is going nonstop to identify and find solutions for the problems. We remain very active on the Fishing Creek and Conowingo watersheds with a new project on the horizon for Fishing Creek. The stream work, the tree plantings, the creation of riparian buffers are all parts of the big picture and require all of our help. So please volunteer as much as you can. Keep an eye on the website for volunteer opportunities because every hour we spend on a project brings us one small step closer to achieving our water quality goals. Because of all your support, I believe we have the best TU chapter in Pennsylvania and I am very proud of that fact.

Thanks so much for all you do!!!

Badges to fish Millport Conservancy are still available from Tom Hall. The price is $20 at a meeting or event, $22.50 for us to mail it to you. Volunteers will be needed at Special Olympics, June 22. Contact Wayne Boggs to volunteer.
Volunteers will be needed at Speedwell Forge, June 15. Contact Bill Nolan to volunteer.
Volunteers will be needed at our Intro to Fly Fishing at Millport Conservancy, June 15. Contact Derek Eberley to volunteer.

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Welcome New Members

Rob Allison
266 Shamrock Drive
Mount Joy, PA 17552
Ryallison@hotmail.com

Amy Davis
2974 Heidelberg Ave
Newmanstown, PA 17073
ej-aedavis@hotmail.com

Jason L Esh
237A S Vintage Rd
Paradise, PA 17562
Eshjasonl@gmail.com

Peter Antonic
11 Hopkins Mill Rd
New Providence, PA 17560
antonicp@hotmail.com

Matthew DePugh
347 N. Broad St
Lititz, PA 17543
mdepugh@gmail.com

Michael Focht
331 W Main St
New Holland, PA 17557

Guy Benner
99 Strasburg Pike
Lancaster, PA 17602

Jennifer Dibiassi
730 Mount Gretna Road
Elizabethtown, PA 17022
jmb2008@embarqmail.com

James Foulk
1881 Spudwell Rd
Lancaster, PA 17601
gail222@comcast.net

Andrew Boyack
113 Townhouse Lane
Lancaster, PA 17603
Andrewboyack@yahoo.com

Dan Droddy
194 North Market Street
Mount Joy, PA 17552
Daniel.droddy1980@gmail.com

Chris Forsyth
710 Rockwood Dr
Elizabethtown, PA 17022
cjaf81@gmail.com

Mark Brabson
443 Little Britain Rd S
Peach Bottom, Pa 17563

Brad Fridinger
407 S Cedar St
Lititz, PA 17543
madhunter48@hotmail.com

Images of mayflies in this publication are based on photographs from Jason Neuswanger (www.troutnut.com), whose rights, contribution to our knowledge of streamlife, and photographic skills are gratefully acknowledged.

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Committee Reports

PROGRAMS

JUNE

It’s Summertime & time for our first picnic of the year. Join us at Millport Conservancy @ 6 pm for another of Chef Stan’s glorious repasts hot off the grill. Bring a folding chair, wear tick repellent. Friends & family are welcome.

JULY

As traditional, there will be no chapter meeting in July. Enjoy some fishing, time with your family, and if you must, mow the lawn.

AUGUST

Our final meeting of the Summer, adhering to our modified time schedule. We’ll be having a picnic at a site yet to be determined. Wherever we gather, Chef Stan will be manning the grill, starting at 6 pm.

DEPIK EBERLY
PROGRAM CHAIRMAN

CONSERVATION

Garry has been getting the nursery up to full speed. They installed new irrigation lines for the sprinklers. As feast or famine go, we were wondering about plant material, then trees fall from the sky, so we have plenty of trees and shrubs to get potted. Penn State will be holding 2 potting parties, one on May 11th and one on May 16th, and Garry will lead a planting on watershed day.

We hosted a tree planting at the Bob Herr farm on May 4th, the weather was a little sketchy, but about 30 volunteers were brave enough and we planted about 300 trees and shrubs along with about 700 live stakes. We had 4 DTU members, Friends of Fishing Creek and neighbors. State Representative Brian Cutler and his kids joined us. The project looks pretty amazing, the grass has greened up, and we survived some major high water events. On the Benuel Beiler farm, DTU had to pay to have fencing installed. We were able to get Benuel to set the fence back about 25 ft, allowing some room for trees and shrubs. He is very happy with the work, and I think this example will get many more participants. The fence cost $4169.80. This will be paid from our conservation funds. Construction on the remaining portion on Fishing Creek and then the Beiler trib will resume after June 15th. The trees and shelters were donated by CBF, Keystone 10 Million Tree Initiative, and the live stakes were cut and donated by The Chesapeake Conservancy. Barry is working on a large grant for Camp Andrews upstream of Silver Springs Rd. This is due the end of May.

As part of the AG BMP grant for Fishing Creek, we held a meeting of landowners interested in buffer plantings. A very small group attended, but they all expressed interest in having some stream bank stabilization work done along with fencing and buffers. These projects will be very helpful in sediment reduction into Fishing Creek.

Barry Witmer submitted a grant application for the Susquehanna Riverlands grant. The grant will be used to mitigate some storm-water that is eroding the hillside behind the township facility. It will also remove some invasives on the hillside and replant native species. The storm-water gullies will be stabilized and below the roadway it will be piped to the bottom of the hill into a settling basin, rain garden type structure. The horse path that has been eroding will be regraded and have some diverters installed then mulched.

Barry received word yesterday that we were awarded the grant. The grant amount is $23,300, DTU will need to put up cash match of $12,500. The remaining match will be with in-kind services from DTU, Friends of Fishing Creek and Drumore Township. Rettew and Flyway are scheduled to begin the work on the Phillips Project on Conowingo Creek, on the south side of Cardinal Rd. It is a $138,000 project. We are waiting for USFW to review the design and budget for the Simien Esh project, then will apply for 319 funding for implementation. Bob was wandering (aimlessly) around and stumbled onto a farmer willing to have some work done on his property. He is located on Goat Hill Road and it’s a tributary to the Conowingo. Bob and Mark Metzler from Rettew will schedule a time to visit and assess the project needs. After the Eco Tour in February, we were asked to present at the annual 319 meeting. Bob, Tom and I attended. Barry created a nice power point summary of projects. Bob made the presentation. EPA is looking to change the 319 a little and have more concentrated work installed on the tribs in order to possibly remove them from the impaired list. So the Goat Hill Road projects are on a tributary.

The Hammer Creek project is moving along. Shaun McAdams of National TU will be developing a 3-phase assessment of the watershed. We are generating a lot of landowner interest so I don’t think it will be a problem finding projects. We hope to do in-stream water quality surveys along with electro fishing data. I have been talking with SRBC about installing in stream monitoring equipment, that could provide ongoing turbidity, in 15 minute increments. Sedimentation is one of the main factors, as is visible in the upper end of Speedwell Lake. Still no go ahead on the dam removal, a slow process. DEP is working on creating an Alternative TMDL for this watershed, which will allow access to 319 funding, a little less competitive.

We have a pretty long list of projects waiting design and budgets. Unfortunately it takes a few years to work through the layers and find the funding.

I attended a meeting in March hosted by CBF. CBF has taken on the Pequea Creek initiative. It is a stream with great potential, beginning in Chester County and flowing into the Susquehanna. The plan is to begin working the tributaries, it has a wide variety

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Drumore Park Planting

Greg was able to assemble a troop of volunteers from Pack 91 to plant trees on the slope behind the Drumore Township offices, where they will help combat runoff on the long slope down to Drumore Park.

Photos courtesy Greg Wilson
The Chapter once again helped out at Fly on the Run, raising money for LCTC.
For those who may not have heard, there was a significant fish kill on the Donegal on or about April 28. This has been covered by local news media (television & newspapers).

As soon as we heard, several members of the Chapter & members of Donegal Fish & Conservation were on the scene to document the incident. It appears a hundred or so fish - trout, suckers, sculpin, minnows - as well as a great many macroinvertebrates, were killed. Contrary to DEP & Fish & Boat’s initial statement these were not only stocked rainbows, but wild rainbows & browns as well.

DEP says that due to the timing, they are unable to single out a cause or source. Our best guess is off-flow from one of the farms on a trib, but we’ll never know for sure.

The good news is that it appears to have been a single slug that passed downstream quickly and the stream is rapidly recovering. DFCA continues to monitor the situation.

Photos courtesy Derek Eberley

New members at the May Meeting: Gina Keiser, Brandon Crouser, Andrew Watson & Kelley Kirsch
Photo courtesy Joy McMaster
Remember those flies the members of our VSP program spent the Winter tying? Well, it’s time to take them out and decorate some south-central PA trees with them.

Bill’s crew has risen to the challenge, and caught some trout while they were at it!

Well done, gentlemen!

Photos courtesy
Bill Nolan
Karen Fry
1892 Meadow Ridge Drive
Hummelstown, PA 17036
fryberg14@comcast.net

Matt Fuddy
104 Basler Dr
Elizabethtown, PA 17022
Mfuddy@gmail.com

Ryan Gabers
681 Sue Drive
Lititz, PA 17543
Rgabers@ptd.net

Sarah Glenn
41 Windemere Court
Elizabethtown, PA 17022
sarah.e.glenn6@gmail.com

Wyatt Green
4 Apache Circle
Conestoga, PA 17516
Wyatt.j.green95@gmail.com

Douglas Grow
8 Conestoga Dr Apt 306
Lititz, PA 17543

Rachel Hammond
508 Stonerose Court
Stevens, PA 17578
rmh0187@yahoo.com

David Hershey
2476 Creek View Dr
Lancaster, PA 17602
dhershey2476@comcast.net

Elyse Jurgen
532 Prospect Street
Lancaster, PA 17603
esjurgen@gmail.com

Michael Katchur
102 West End Ave
Lititz, PA 17543
mikekatchur@gmail.com

Gina Keiser
912 Jade Ave
Lancaster, PA 17601
ggkeiser@comcast.net

Craig Kenney
98 Fieldcrest Ln
Ephrata, PA 17522
ckenney202@yahoo.com

Kelley Kirsch
727 Baumgardner Road
Lancaster, PA 17603
Kelley@insurfaces.com

Kenny Kocher
934 Merganser Lane
Elizabethtown, PA 17022
flyfishingjunkie95@gmail.com

Justin Kratzer
11 Julie Ter
Lititz, PA 17543
jtkratzer@hotmail.com

Ed Krimmel
3724 Northside Drive
Landisville, PA 17538
Bkrimmel@vomcast.net

Leslie Landis
1225 May Post Office Rd
Quarryville, PA 17566

Ashley Lansdowne
1903 Friends Lane
Lancaster, PA 17603
ashleylansdowne@gmail.com

Ronald Layton
104 S Brown St
Elizabethtown, PA 17022

James Martin
1900 Speedwell Rd
Lancaster, PA 17601
jrmartin342@outlook.com

Keith Maurer
31 Clover Ave
Strasburg, PA 17579

Patrick McCrea
1010 Marietta Ave
Lancaster, PA 17603

Angie Mongeau
1849 Habecker Road
Columbia, PA 17512
admongeau@earthlink.net

Chris Mosch
1090 Chapel Forge Drive
Lancaster, PA 17601
Mosch302@gmail.com

Steve Mumaw
1801 Rissler Lane
Lancaster, PA 17601
srmmumaw@comcast.net

Donald Murr
346 W Main St
Ephrata, PA 17522

Jennifer Pollock
146 Donegal Drive
Elizabethtown, PA 17022
jdpollock4@gmail.com

Ray Price
21 Cold Stream Drive
Lancaster, PA 17603

Gratzberry375@gmail.com

Shawn Reiff
1669 Leona Avenue
Lancaster, PA 17601
Shawnrff@gmail.com

Pauline Risser
1235 Turnpike Road
Elizabethtown, PA 17022
pauline.risser@gmail.com

Derek Roher
1089 Dry Wells Road
Quarryville, PA 17566

Kim Root
500 Pond Vista Lane Apt C
Manheim, PA 17545
Root108@phd.net

Mark Russell
439 Speedwell Forge Rd
Lititz, PA 17543

Fred Schenck
2222 New Danville Pike
Lancaster, PA 17603

Stephen Shaw
2103 Rockvale Road
Lancaster, PA 17602
Sstephensj@comcast.net

Kelly Snavely
1021 New Holland Avenue
Lancaster, PA 17601
kellysnavely@gmail.com

Brian Snitzer
421 Longmeadow rd
Lancaster, PA 17601
Brian@snitzer.org

Deborah Stough
8929 East Springfield Road
Seven Valleys, PA 17360
deborah.stough@gmail.com

Mary Sweger
1 1 Lark Lane,
Lititz, PA 17543
billmary518@gmail.com

Pam Terrell
67 East Orange Street
Elizabethtown, PA 17022
murphyterrell@gmail.com
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to register
On April 28, our new Women’s Coordinator held her initial intro to FF for women. Eighteen enthusiastic women attended, at Hugh Wenger’s pond, 15 of them subsequently joining the Chapter. Pam will be scheduling a followup program for those unable to attend the first one.

For the time being our ladies are joining the vets on their fishing outings, pending further organization.
A team of volunteers helped Logan Myers clear out some invasives & open up a clogged spring run on Lititz. Thanks, gang.